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SCARLETT
image
#03

ENERGON UNIVERSE

CONFIDENTIAL

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SCARLETT

G.I. JOE

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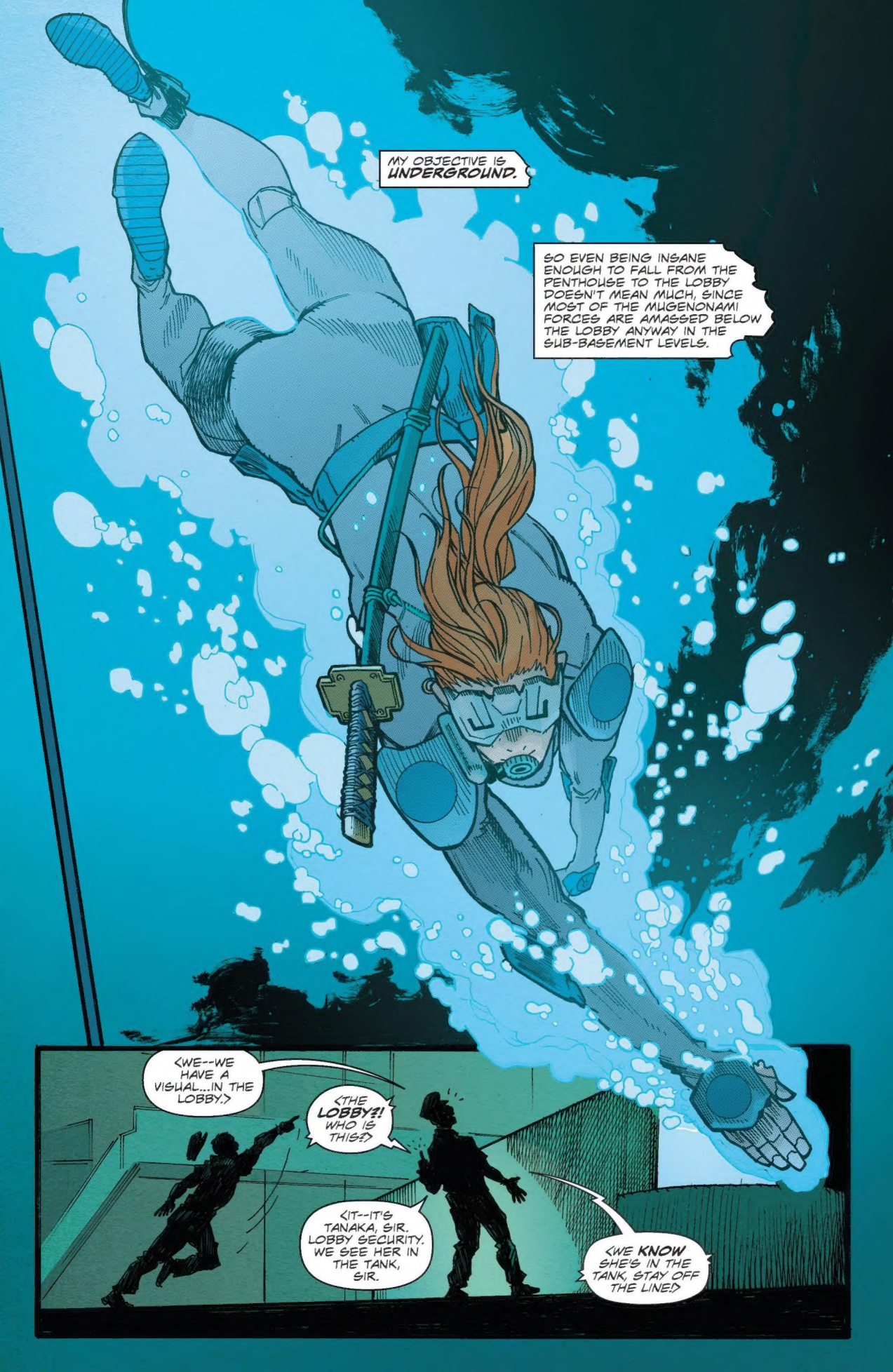
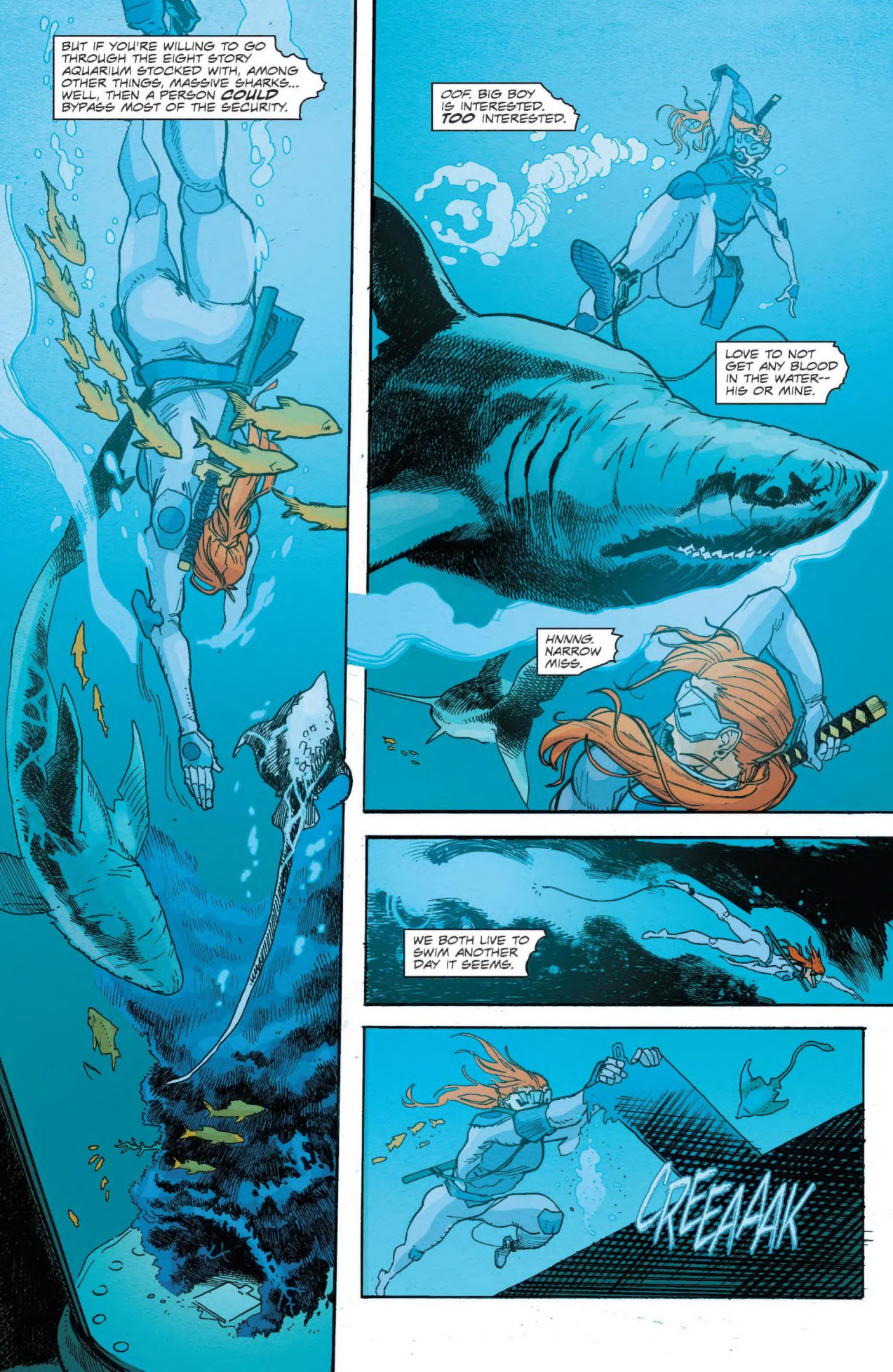
SATO II: THE TIGER. GROUND FLOOR. CURRENTLY UNDER MUGENONAMI CONTROL.
<SHE JUMPED! CAN'T BELIEVE SHE $#@%ING JUMPED!>*
<THAT'S A CODE BLACK.>
<FULL LOCKDOWN.>
<SEND EVERYONE! NOW!>
SATO II
*TRANSLATED FROM JAPANESE
<HEAD TO EIGHT. EVERYONE TO EIGHT! THAT'S WHERE SHE'LL EXIT THE TANK.>


MY OBJECTIVE IS UNDERGROUND.
SO EVEN BEING INSANE ENOUGH TO FALL FROM THE PENTHOUSE TO THE LOBBY DOESN'T MEAN MUCH, SINCE MOST OF THE MUGENONAMI FORCES ARE AMASSED BELOW THE LOBBY ANYWAY IN THE SUB-BASEMENT LEVELS.
<WE--WE HAVE A VISUAL...IN THE LOBBY.>
<THE LOBBY?! WHO IS THIS?>
<IT--IT'S TANAKA, SIR. LOBBY SECURITY. WE SEE HER IN THE TANK, SIR.
<WE KNOW SHE'S IN THE TANK, STAY OFF THE LINE!>


BUT IF YOU'RE WILLING TO GO THROUGH THE EIGHT STORY AQUARIUM STOCKED WITH, AMONG OTHER THINGS, MASSIVE SHARKS... WELL, THEN A PERSON COULD BYPASS MOST OF THE SECURITY.
OOF. BIG BOY IS INTERESTED. TOO INTERESTED.
LOVE TO NOT GET ANY BLOOD IN THE WATER-- HIS OR MINE.
HNNNG. NARROW MISS.
WE BOTH LIVE TO SWIM ANOTHER DAY IT SEEMS.
CREEAAAK

KRRR-KKKTCH
SHHHRR
RRWWW
KRRR-KCHK
ACCORDING TO THE PLANS, THE POWER SOURCE IS SIX LEVELS DOWN.

SATO II: THE TIGER.
FLOOR -1.
非常口
Exit
BUT IF I CAN'T LOCK MOST OF THE MUGENONAMI OUT, IT MIGHT AS WELL BE A THOUSAND LEVELS DOWN.
<TAKE HER ALIVE IF POSSIBLE.>
<FIRST WAVE ARRIVING ON EIGHT. PROCEED WITH CAUTION. RE-ENFORCEMENTS FROM SUB LEVELS EN-ROUTE.>
<NO SIGN OF HER IN THE TANK. TEAMS ONE AND TWO, SPREAD OUT TO SEARCH ON EIGHT.>

FFFFTTT
FFFTTT
FFFFTTT
<NO SIGN OF HER ON EIGHT. SWEEPING SEVEN NOW.>
<CONTROL ROOM, ANY SIGN OF HER?>
<POSSIBLE SIGHTING ON SEVEN.>
SMASH
<TEAM TWO. FORM ON SEVEN. EAST WING.>
<COPY.>

I SUPPOSE IT WAS TOO MUCH TO HOPE THAT WAS ALL OF THEM.
I FEEL LIKE MY "I'M JUST AN INNOCENT TOURIST LOST ON THE WAY BACK FROM THE BATHROOM" BIT ISN'T GOING TO PLAY HERE.
ALL THIS GEAR MAKES THAT A TOUGH SELL.
FFFFTT
FFFFTT
FFFFTT
THUNK
THUNK
ARRRGHH!

HNNNG!

SLICE

ARRRH-*

STAB

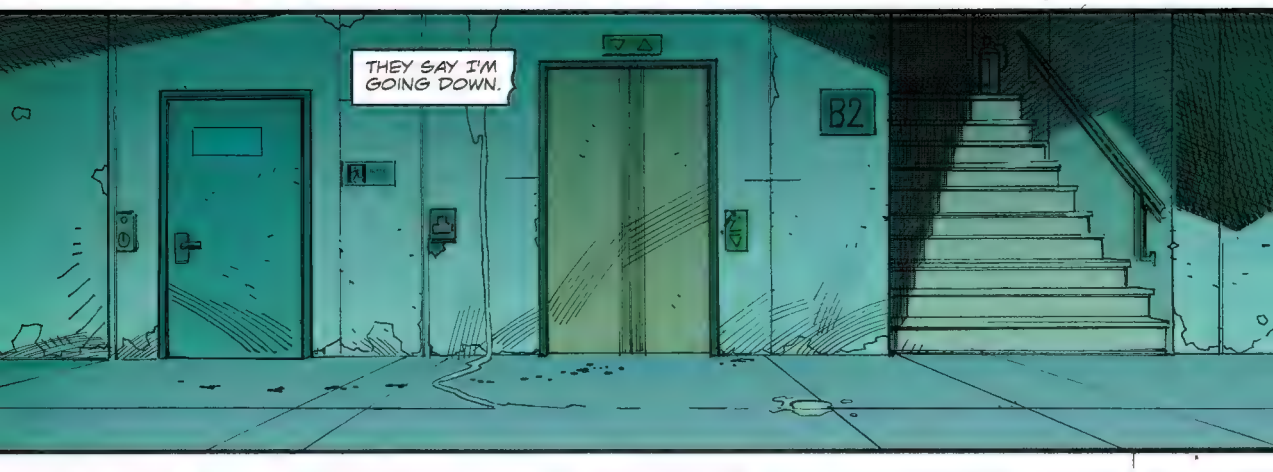
AIIEEE!!

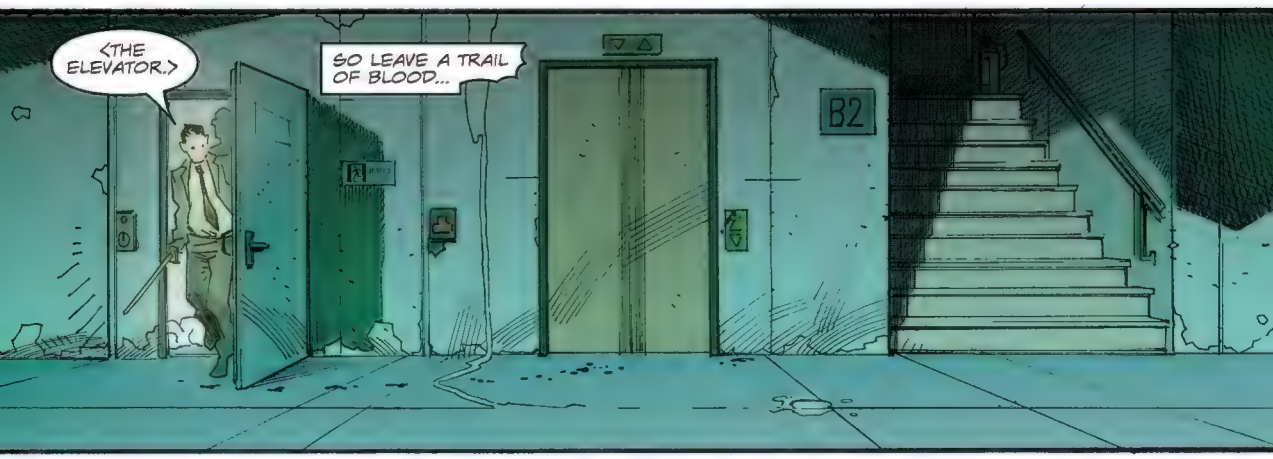
S#@%.

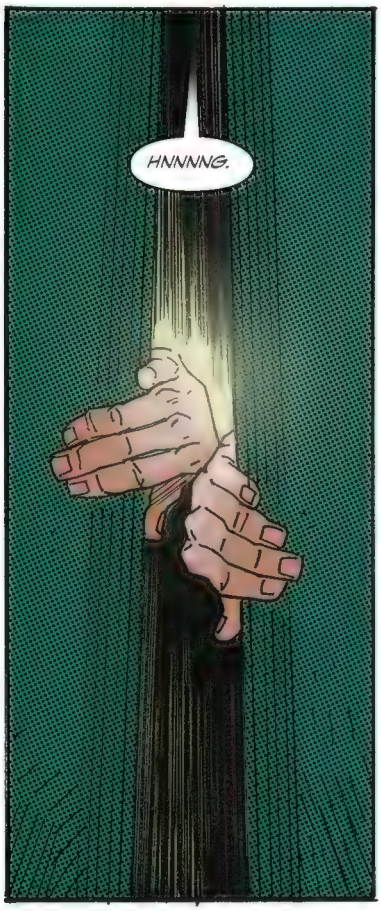
STAB

SHNNG!

<SHE GOT PAST US. =>KOFF<= WE THINK SHE'S HEADED TOWARD THE CONTROL ROOM ON SUB-BASEMENT SIX. =>KOFF-KOFF<
THIS IS MAYBE A PROBLEM.
PING
IS CATCHING A BREAK ON A MISSION JUST PURE LUCK...
OR A SERIES OF BADASS LITTLE MOVES THAT END UP WORKING TO YOUR ADVANTAGE LATER?


THEY SAY I'M GOING DOWN.
B2

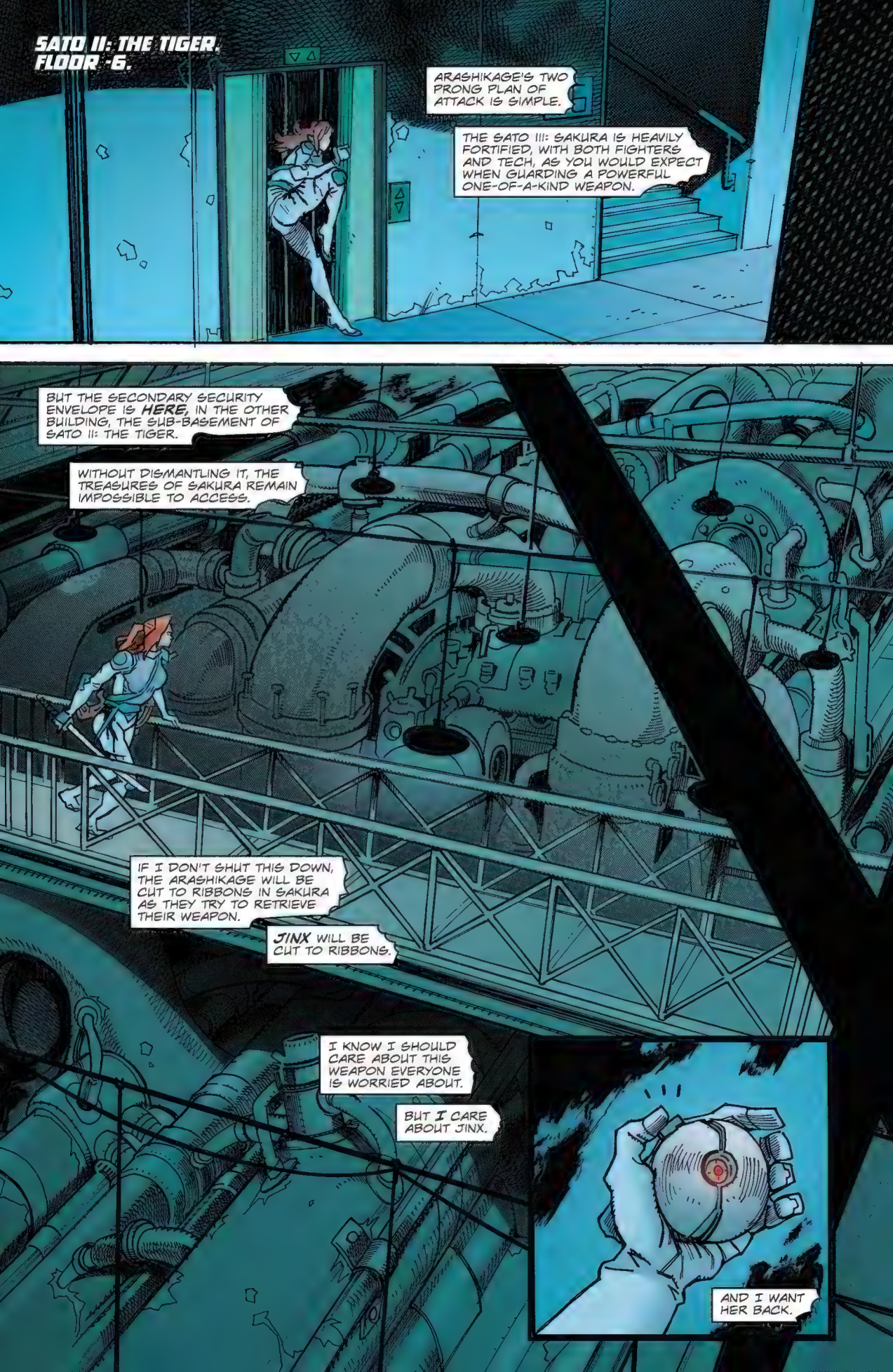

<THE ELEVATOR.>
SO LEAVE A TRAIL OF BLOOD...
B2


HNNNNG.

THAT GOES UP, NOT DOWN.
<THERE.>

KLIK
<OFF. SHE CAN HEAR US, YOU FOOL.>

THE SATO III: SAKURA.
SATO Corp.
SATO Corp.
SATO Corp.
<YOUR WHITE GIRL IS ABOUT TO MISS HER WINDOW.>
<SHE'LL GET IT DONE.>
AIIIEEEEE-*
FZZAKT
<YOU BETTER HOPE SO, STORM SHADOW. I'M NOT INTERESTED IN BEING BISECTED TODAY.>


SATO II: THE TIGER.
FLOOR -6.
ARASHIKAGE'S TWO PRONG PLAN OF ATTACK IS SIMPLE.
THE SATO III: SAKURA IS HEAVILY FORTIFIED, WITH BOTH FIGHTERS AND TECH, AS YOU WOULD EXPECT WHEN GUARDING A POWERFUL ONE-OF-A-KIND WEAPON.
BUT THE SECONDARY SECURITY ENVELOPE IS HERE, IN THE OTHER BUILDING, THE SUB-BASEMENT OF SATO II: THE TIGER.
WITHOUT DISMANTLING IT, THE TREASURES OF SAKURA REMAIN IMPOSSIBLE TO ACCESS.
IF I DON'T SHUT THIS DOWN, THE ARASHIKAGE WILL BE CUT TO RIBBONS IN SAKURA AS THEY TRY TO RETRIEVE THEIR WEAPON.
JINX WILL BE CUT TO RIBBONS.
I KNOW I SHOULD CARE ABOUT THIS WEAPON EVERYONE IS WORRIED ABOUT.
BUT I CARE ABOUT JINX.
AND I WANT HER BACK.

WHAM
?!
SLK
ARRRGGH!
I WAS SORTA HOPING FOR AN UNDERPAID LACKEY STUCK IN THE SUB-BASEMENT TYPE, BUT THIS IS MORE A "FINAL BOSS" TYPE, HUH?
KRAK

WHAM
KRAK
KRAK

<SHE'S IN THE HEART. SUB-BASEMENT SIX. EVERYONE TO THE HEART.>
TTCCT
KRRR CHHK
THUNK
HRRK--
<I'M SORRY.>
36
#@$%ING ENDLESS WAVE.
CLICK

KA-BOOM
<TELL EVERYONE.>
<SAKURA SECURITY IS DOWN.>
<CODE BLACK FOR TIGER. CODE BLACK FOR SAKURA.>
HOPE THAT DID IT, JINX.

THE SATO III:
SAKURA.
<SHE DID IT. I CAN'T BELIEVE IT.>
YOUR DOUBT IN ME CONTINUES TO DELIGHT ME.
I WOULDN'T PUT IT THAT WAY.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO. I DID.

<WE THINK SHE USED THE ELEVATOR SHAFT. BUT WE DON'T KNOW WH-->
<IT NO LONGER MATTERS! EVERYONE TO SAKURA. NOW!>
KRR-CHK

SATO II:
THE TIGER.
THE ROOF.
I MAY HAVE MISSED MY CALLING AS SOME KIND OF BASE JUMPER.
IS THAT A REAL JOB? WILL SOMEONE PAY YOU TO DO THAT? SURVIVE THIS, AND I'M SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING LOOKING INTO IT.
KRR-CHK
CLICK
I MEAN, I DID ALWAYS WANT TO DIE GLORIOUSLY.
HOPED IT WOULD BE A BIT LATER... BUT HERE WE ARE.

HNNNG!
BAM
THE SATO III:
SAMURA,
FLOOR 47.
-GROAN-

NEXT: THE SOUL OF THE ARASHIKAGE!

DIRECT ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO

[redacted]

GIJOE@SKYBOUND.COM

Welcome back to another killer issue of SCARLETT and what an awesome ending…Jinx and Scarlett FINALLY get to say hello to each other. It took 72 pages but it was well worth the wait! Joining me this month in answering some letters is none other than the amazing, multi-Eisner nominated writer of SCARLETT, Kelly Thompson!

All right, let's jump into this month's letters!

Hello Scarlett/Skybound crew,

Great first issue by Thompson, Ferrari, and Loughridge.

As a huge fan of Storm Shadow and of Kelly Thompson, I can't tell you how excited I've been for this and, having now read issue 1, how excited I am to see where the next four issues take us.

I'm hoping this universe continues for a long time and I can start my nieces reading Scarlett/GI Joe someday in the future. I know Kelly Thompson won't shy away from showing the world what an amazing character and role-model Shana O'Hara is.

A life-long GI Joe fan,
Joe Renckly

Glad you loved the first issue and thank you for dropping us a line! I hope your nieces enjoy the series as much as we've enjoyed making this book!

Hey Joe.

Good name. ;D

Thanks so much for jumping on board and giving us a chance. And I hope your nieces love it when they're old enough. I am admittedly pretty in the tank for a badass good guy like Shana--bonus points if they're a redhead. ;D

Greetings Team Scarlett,
I may have mentioned this in a previous letter, but I was never the hugest fan of G.I. Joe growing up. Not that I hated it, far from it, but I just never got into it the way I did with other franchises. So going into the first issue of Scarlett, I was basically being introduced to Scarlett, Jinx, and the Arashikage clan for the first time here. After reading it, I can confidently say that the Energon Universe isn't losing steam anytime soon.

I'm a huge fan of Kelly Thompson and her previous work, so I love seeing her get to add her creative voice to the ever-expanding EU. I love the voice she gives Scarlett and it has me really interested to see how her relationship with Jinx will grow and change as the story progresses. This is also the first time I've been introduced to the artwork of Marco Ferrari and I think he knocked it out of the park, as he expertly manages to balance the high octane action with the more quiet character moments. And the colors by Lee Loughridge compliment Marco's pencils rather well. Now, at the end of the first issue, we see the first appearance of Storm Shadow. Where did the idea come from that Storm Shadow should debut here in Scarlett? And does this mean that there is potential for a certain Snake Eyes to make an appearance further down the line?

Much love,
Owen Seyler

I'm honored our first issue was your introduction to this rich cast of characters and world! I'm a pretty big Kelly Thompson fan myself, as we worked together at my last editorial stop, and when I learned I'd reteam with her on SCARLETT? Dream come true! And then factor in the ninja force of Marco, Lee and Rus…I'll let Kelly answer your questions…

Thanks for reading! I think, one of the brilliant moves of how Skybound is setting up this new universe is that each new character-focused mini-series has also been a fascinating--but organic--peek into another corner of the Energon Universe. And for SCARLETT--once I pitched that she should be infiltrating the Arashikage--it was obvious we would reach for the introduction of Storm Shadow, one of the greatest GI Joe characters of all time, and an absolute force to be reckoned with.

As for Snake Eyes [redacted] and that's really all I can say about that right now.

Since the introduction of the new Energon Universe in Void Rivals I have been hooked! Then DWJ's Transformers began really connecting them all and my inner child has been screaming with joy since. But the whole time I have been wondering... "when and where are the Arashikage gonna debut?" And after issue #1 of Scarlett I have my answer! I can't wait to see

how Scarlett's mission will unfold as Kelly Thompson wrote an amazing introductory issue. Thank you (and Marco Ferrari on the amazing art style) for bringing the Arashikage to front!

- B.Done

Thanks B.!

The Arashikage are big players in this developing world, especially as Cobra pushes on the world in dramatic ways. Scarlett (and Jinx) being front row center to which way Arashikage will ultimately decide to go and why--is exactly the kind of ground up world building that Skybound is doing that's so cool.

Team Scarlett,

Not only did you win over this guy (a fan since issue 1 of ARAH), you won over my 11-year old daughter! That might be even more impressive since she had to put down her electronics to read it (yes, I know I can get the issues electronically)! This was the first paperback issue I have bought in decades.

Both she and I agree, the story was amazing and well-paced. I loved being allowed to into Scarlett's head, hearing what she was thinking. My daughter loved the opening sequence of Scarlett coming out of the water and changing into formal wear. Perfect cliffhanger (I got to explain who Storm Shadow was). The art beautiful throughout.

When are the Skybound artists' designs going to be made into figures? Just from this issue alone you have Scarlett in the wet suit, Scarlett in snow gear, and Scarlett in a dress, which would all rock! But you also have scruffy Duke and Cobra Commander from theirs (please don't forget the smiley face). Not to mention the Bludd Hounds and countless others.

Looking forward to the ride!
Jeremy

I'm so happy and honored that you and your daughter enjoyed this series together…but wait until you read #2! It gets EVEN better! And yes, I'm in 100% agreement on Hasbro needing to make some E.U. figures…I need to make some phone calls…

Thank you so much for sharing this with your daughter. Knowing that we got it right for BOTH of you is huge. That's honestly a hard marker to hit for any book, but I feel like it has even more impact when we know we're dialing CORRECTLY into something you have a deep and complicated nostalgia for while ALSO dialing correctly into something brand new for new/young readers. That's everything. And I really appreciate you writing in to tell us. Made my day.

To Kelly and all on Team Scarlett,

Larry Hama always speaks of Snake-Eyes, Storm Shadow, Scarlett, and Stalker as being the core of the G.I. Joe team. Writing the true introduction for two of those characters in the Energon Universe for the opening issue of Scarlett is a real honor. I am thrilled to see you have risen to the challenge!

With the launch of G.I. Joe in the 80s, Scarlett was the only female amongst the toy and comic ranks. She certainly can handle herself and holds her own in these pages! Her relationship with Jinx is a new and interesting twist and I am curious to understand more of their backstory.

Scarlett's journey is off to an intense and harrowing start. I applaud the steps she has taken thus far and look forward to what is sure to be a heart-pounding ride. After that first encounter with Storm Shadow, let's get Doc in here stat!

Michael Nie

P.S. If there is any question as to Scarlett's popularity, I count twenty unique covers for issue one alone, a new record for any G.I. Joe title in this Energon Universe. There sure are some great ones!

Thank you for reading, Michael, and I'm glad you're along for this awesome ride!

I think you're right that the number of covers (and sales) on SCARLETT #1 attest well to how many of us loved her from the very beginning. And I'm elated to hear that our take on her is landing for die-hards--as that's always an intimidating bar. But I knew we had a small advantage going in--in that Larry Hama is right--we DID get some of the absolute best characters and ideas in the G.I. Joe Universe in the form of Scarlett, Storm Shadow, Jinx, and the Arashikage. They also happened to be some of my favorites as well--which doesn't make things less intimidating but does make them more fun! ;D

Next month, we take it up to level 11 with our deadly trio as they hunt for the mysterious Arashikage weapon!

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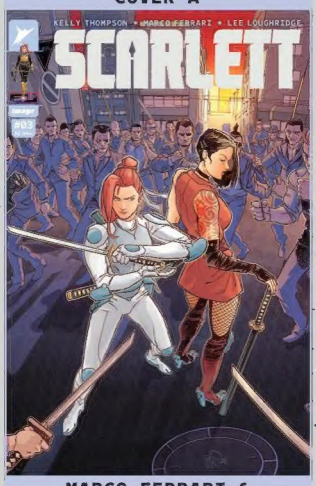

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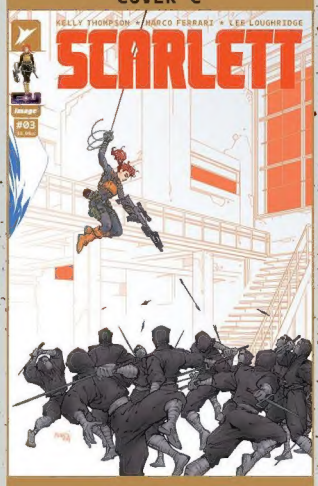

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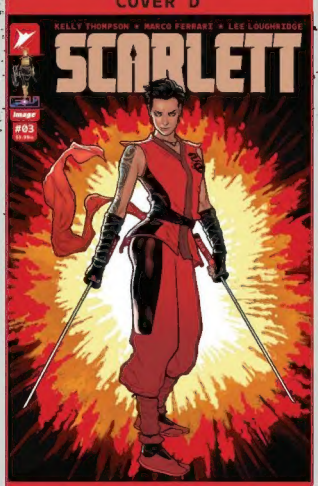

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